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MODERN PHILOSOPHY

AND

BARBARISM:

OR,

A COMPARISON

BETWEEN

THE THEORY OF GODWIN,

AND

THE PRACTICE OF LYCURGUS.

AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE

THE IDENTITY OF THE TWO SYSTEMS,

AND THE

INJURIOUS CONSEQUENCES WHICH MUST RESULT TO MANKIND

FROM THE

PRINCIPLES OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY

CARRIED INTO PRACTICE.

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PREFACE.

IT has been thought, and the idea appears to be founded in truth, that a very ſhort diſtance exiſts between ſcepticiſm and ſuperſtition; and, upon inveſtigation, there will probably be found a ſimilar approximation from modern philoſophy towards ſavage barbariſm. An inquiry, tending to elucidate this poſition, it will be uſeful to inſtitute, that the ſyſtem of the new ſchool may be exhibited and diſplayed, ſtript of thoſe faſcinating graces, and that elegant dreſs, which impoſe upon the underſtanding, and induce it to believe there is beauty, when deformity only exiſts. The author, in the enſuing ſheets, has briefly attempted to prove, that what is given to the world as a new theory of political juſtice, is only the ſyſtem of the Lacedemonian legiſlator, Lycurgus, clothed in a modern garb, and interwoven with ſome of the improvements that have been made, ſubſequent to the era of his exiſtence and legiſlation; but ſtill leading to the ſame end, and productive of ſimilarly injurious conſequences to the happineſs and dignity of mankind; he has likewiſe endea-

voured to diſplay the viſionary folly and abſurdity, which mark the outlines of the ſyſtem, and diſguiſe its true figure, and the ſtill worſe effects which would reſult, were it poſſible to be carried into execution in its utmoſt theoretical extent. Great defects of arrangement, and much unconnected obſervation, may be found in the work, but his intentions are good; and whilſt he pleads inexperience in compoſition, as an apology for trifling errors, he gives his humble production with confidence to the world, flattered by the hope, that, however it may fail in eſtabliſhing the reſemblance and identity of the ſyſtems, or proving the injurious tendency and conſequences of modern philoſophy, it will at leaſt ſerve to induce others, poſſeſſed of a larger ſhare of talent and ingenuity, to inveſtigate the ſubject with greater accuracy and preciſion; and, from the colliſion of argument, ſome truths may elicit, and be eſtabliſhed, of the higheſt importance to the welfare and happineſs of man.

MODERN PHILOSOPHY AND *BARBARISM, &c.*

HOWEVER diſſimilar the inſtitutions of Lycurgus and the political juſtice of Godwin may at firſt ſight appear, there will be found, upon compariſon, a ſtriking likeneſs between the prominent features of each, and the ſhade of difference between them will nearly vaniſh. It was the firſt principle inculcated by the Spartan legiſlator, and upon which his ſyſtem depended for ſupport, that each individual ought to ſacrifice his affections, his friendſhips, and his intereſts, to the public good, and general welfare of the community. The excluſive and endearing titles of huſband, father, and friend, were ſwallowed up and extinguiſhed in the cold and generalized denomination of citizen. The Spartan mother cared not for the death of her ſons, though three were ſlain upon the field of battle, and ſhe left childleſs by the event; but was only attentive to the victory gained by her country: every maternal feeling, every tender parental ſentiment, was dead and extinct in her boſom, whilſt their place was uſurped by a general idea, which actuated the mind, but conveyed no impreſſion to the heart. This principle,

ciple, carried into action by means carefully adjuſted to the end, forcibly eraſed every diſtinguiſhing peculiarity of character, and ſpread a dull uniformity over the Spartan ſtate; rendering it a vaſt machine, in which each individual mechanically performed the office of a wheel or ſpring, for the purpoſe of putting in motion the whole. This was the hinge upon which the whole Lycurgean ſyſtem turned; and this alſo ſupports the ſyſtem of Godwin; for its fundamental axiom is, that man ſhall ſacrifice every ſympathy reſulting from his feelings and ſenſibility to the general good; and ſhall commit no act which he is not convinced in his own mind will tend to promote and aſſiſt that one and only object, which he is conſtantly to have in view, and ever have preſent before his intellectual faculties, when forming a deciſion relative to his future conduct. Here, too, parental feeling, wedded love, and friendly eſteem, are to be eradicated from the breaſt, and preſſed to the ground by the overwhelming weight of general utility; by this cruſhed and annihilated; and by this ſupplanted. In the ſyſtem thus founded, Affection and Sympathy plead in vain the unalloyed dictates of Nature; Senſibility weeps unheeded; and Filial Piety is treated with contempt: man muſt reaſon himſelf out of his feelings, and then, ſtrange abſurdity! act in the firſt

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inſtance from the concluſions of Judgment, where Nature had provided he ſhould be previouſly led by Sympathy, and afterwards ſupported by Intellect. This principle cannot be carried into execution by individuals acting in an inſulated manner; but muſt be by a congregated body directing the exertions of each: and thus, though by the ancient legiſlator its operation was confined within the bounds of a petty ſtate, and by the modern philoſophical politician is enlarged to take the univerſe in its graſp; yet, notwithſtanding this apparent extenſion, it is really ſo narrowed in operation, as to end in that effect which was originally intended to be produced by the Spartan Lycurgus. It is evident that man cannot act alone, for the benefit of his ſpecies; there muſt be the co-operation of many, to produce individual good: and if there is any poſſibility of carrying it into practice, it is only by mutual aſſociation. A community comprehending all the inhabitants of the globe is a monſtrous chimera, which never will be realized, ſince impediments thrown in the way by nature, are too powerful to be overcome by the exertions of philoſophy. There muſt be, therefore, a number of aſſociations, each acting for the benefit of the individuals who compoſe it; theſe will of neceſſity be actuated by ſeparate intereſts, and thoſe,

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in return, will generate local prejudices. A body of men congregated together to carry into practice this principle of general utility, muſt direct the attention of each individual to that alone; until at laſt, from being infuſed into the infant mind, before reaſon is capable of conſidering its merits, and carefully nurtured, to the excluſion of individual affections, it becomes a prejudice, becauſe it is no longer ſubject to the control of rationality. It is eaſy to conceive, that the prejudices of different communities may, from the imbecility of human nature, become oppoſed to each other in a ſtate of warfare, and produce effects highly diſconſonant with univerſal benevolence. Thus, when this fine-ſpun philoſophy is to be carried into practice, to produce any portion of that good which its theory ſo magnificently diſplays, we have again the old regimen of a diviſion of territory, ſeparate intereſts, local attachments, and oppoſite prejudices. I ſhall hereafter endeavour to ſhew, that this modernized ſyſtem, if practiſed in the utmoſt extent of its theory, ſo far from enlarging the human mind, is calculated ſtill farther to narrow its operations, and warp it to the approbation and purſuit of the moſt ſelfiſh conduct; ſince man would be then immerſed in all the helpleſſneſs attendant upon an inſulated ſtate; and, deprived of the co-operation of his fellows, would be rendered

dered totally incapable of adminiſtering to the principle of univerſal benevolence, or in the leaſt benefiting mankind, whilſt his actual ſituation would ſoon be a very ſhort remove from that of a wild and barbarous ſavage, as he would not only be deprived of luxury and refinement, but likewiſe of every neceſſary which he did not provide for himſelf, by his own labour. Suffice it at preſent, that this apparently exalted theory of benevolence is identified in this inſtance with the ſyſtem of Lycurgus, by the impoſſibility of reducing it to practice, otherwiſe than by a diviſion of territory and a ſeparation of intereſts, producing different ſtates, each forming a ſimilar machine, worked by the ſame wheels and ſprings which actuated that of Sparta, under the Lycurgean ſyſtem; and however the uſe of force is diſclaimed by the Godwinean ſchool, I ſhall ſoon attempt to prove, that corporal conſtraint and puniſhment is only diſowned in the apparently mild ſyſtem of political juſtice, for the purpoſe of ſubſtituting a power even more tyrannical than that by which the Lacedemonians were enſlaved.

The ſecond point in which the two ſyſtems materially agree, is, the abolition of wealth, and the conſequent equality of condition. Lycurgus, it is well known, endeavoured to annihilate the ſupe-

riority of fortune; ordaining, that all the lands of the ſtate ſhould be divided into equal ſhares, and that each member of the community ſhould poſſeſs one, without the power of increaſing it: and no Lacedemonian citizen was allowed to labour for the uſe of another, becauſe the barter and exchange which muſt of neceſſity have ariſen, would have tended, in the common courſe of human affairs, to produce accumulation, and conſequently wealth, thereby deſtroying the equilibrium he had carefully endeavoured to balance. This is, likewiſe, one of the prominent features that diſtinguiſh the Godwinean theory, which aims, with ſome degree of fanciful extravagance, at an equality more complete than that eſtabliſhed by the Spartan Legiſlator; for he alſo would take away wealth from the hands of its poſſeſſors, leaving them only enough land to ſupport exiſtence, and dividing the reſt in equal ſhares amongſt thoſe who had previouſly ſubſiſted by exchanging the produce of their exertions for the neceſſaries of life. The diviſion of labour is next to be aboliſhed, for preciſely the ſame reaſon that inſtigated Lycurgus: but, from the want of Helots, each man muſt till and cultivate his own land, and run the gauntlet of work through the whole circle of arts neceſſary to the comfort of his exiſtence: he muſt be his own architect, his own taylor,

taylor, and his own ſhoemaker; in ſhort, muſt be confined entirely to the labour of his own hands, without deriving the leaſt aſſiſtance from the efforts of others. The principle is the ſame in both, only extended farther by Godwin than Lycurgus; and the effects reſulting from which it would be uſeleſs here to deſcant upon, as I am only endeavouring to identify the ſyſtems, for the purpoſe of afterwards reaſoning upon their tendency and conſequences.

The third point of agreement which appears in the two ſyſtems, is the annihilation of an excluſive ſexual intercourſe. Lycurgus muſt have been aware that this was a neceſſary auxiliary to the principles he had eſtabliſhed, as the baſis of his inſtitutions, the ſtrong holds of affection being thereby more completely undermined; and the only reaſon why he did not make it clearly and expreſsly a part of his ſyſtem, was doubtleſs a fear of giving too great a ſhock to the prejudices of the age, which might have cauſed a re-action, involving in it the exiſtence of the legiſlator and his laws. The affections, however, leading to and dependant upon ſuch an excluſive intercourſe, he contrived nearly to annihilate, without aboliſhing that intercourſe itſelf. An education was given to the females, which irradicated the ſoft and peculiar

graces of the ſex; and whilſt they were objects of paſſion, and might ſometimes, from a maſculine energy, become entitled to diſtant admiration, no trace of feminine ſoftneſs was left in their character, which could kindle the leaſt ſpark of affection in the breaſt of the male; for, however much may be ſaid upon the powers of the female mind, and the mental equality of woman, conceded by man from the conviction of enlightened reaſon, his affections are not fixed by the moſt brilliant diſplay of feminine talent, where the gentler characteriſtics of the female character are wanting; but by a winning ſoftneſs, and peculiar grace, ever attendant, in the greateſt degree, upon modeſty and good ſenſe. How diſtant then muſt the Spartan women have been from the hope of kindling affection in the breaſt of the male, when, unpoſſeſſed of the brilliancy of genius, and only diſplaying a maſculine and unfeeling courage, they remained deſtitute of every ſofter tint which could ſmooth the harſhneſs of the outline, and exhibited a manly boldneſs, diſguſting as miſplaced. The Lacedemonian was obliged to marry at a certain age, whether his affections were fixed on an object, or ſtill remained dormant; and thus matrimony became merely the creature of paſſion, ſanctioned by law, without the ſlighteſt union of mind; whilſt its fervour was unnaturally prolonged,

to the excluſion of ſentiment, by a peculiar regulation of the Spartan laws, which ſeparated the reſidences of the huſband and wife, and puniſhed the former if he was ſeen to enter her dwelling: thus rendering paſſion, the offspring of corporeal appetite, paramount to affection, the gentle ſtimulus and tranquil ſoother of the mind, and deſtroying the ſoft, yet permanent impreſſions of mutual ſympathy, by the harſh and violent circulation attendant upon the palpitations of animal deſire. After marriage, huſbands were allowed by the laws to lend their wives to others; a practice which could not fail to ſtifle every remaining ember of affection, if any ſentiment of that kind had previouſly been conceived; for ſurely nothing can be more repugnant to every tender ſenſation, and deſtructive to that mutual eſteem upon which matrimonial happineſs muſt be founded, than the diviſion of attention, the invidious compariſons, and the lawleſs deſires to which it muſt give birth in the mind and conduct of the female; whilſt the doubts reſulting from its operation, concerning the paternity of the children, would prove injurious to parental tenderneſs and fatherly regard. And that the ſmall remaining portion of parental affection might be completely annihilated, the offspring of theſe marriages were taken from the parents, and

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reared and educated by the public. Thus even the chance of affection, reſulting from habits of aſſociation, was loſt, and father and ſon took their places in the crowd of citizens, eſtranged to each other, and without any common bond of union capable of uniting them otherwiſe than as members of the ſame community. By an union of theſe means, Lycurgus deſtroyed the branches, the trunk, and the root of private and excluſive affection, and every ſeed from which it was likely to be again germinated. The huſband, led on, in the firſt inſtance, by a temporary paſſion, and ſharing with others the embraces of a wife, advanced in maſculine boldneſs, and unpoſſeſſed of attractive grace, was confined by no ſentimental tie capable of engaging the mind or intereſting the heart. The father, accuſtomed to ſee thoſe of his offſpring deſtroyed, whom accident had deformed, and compelled to reſign the care and education of the reſt into the hands of the community, ſoon became indifferent to parental feeling, and from the want of attentive pains on the one ſide, returned by improvement on the other, and the abſence of a mutual interchange of ſentiment, of ſupport and dependence, felt every ſpark of paternal ſenſibility expire in his boſom. The ſon, conceiving himſelf unindebted to the author of his being, and looking to the ſtate alone

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as his parent, was equally removed from the inroads of filial piety, and eager, from mechanic diſcipline, to ſerve the community, was equally ready to ſacrifice his father, if commanded by public utility. Thus, without appearing to aboliſh an excluſive ſexual intercourſe, he effectually annihilated all the affections which lead to its haunts, and reſult from its effects, and likewiſe thoſe parental duties, which frequently confer ſome degree of mutual happineſs, even in the abſence of ſympathetic emotion; and enchain mankind by the ſtrongeſt tendrils that it is poſſible to twine round the heart. Godwin, placed in a very different ſituation, and not fearing the operation of ſimilar prejudices, does not ſcruple to avow the doctrine, in its fulleſt extent, and boldly tells us, that an excluſive ſexual intercourſe is contrary to the dictates of reaſon; that man and woman ought to cohabit together no longer than till caprice induces them to part; that the children reſulting from ſuch cohabitation ought not to be educated till they deſire it; and that ſuch tuition ſhould be given them by any one who will gratuitouſly take that office upon himſelf. There ſeems to be here a defect in the Godwinean ſyſtem, as education is to be left almoſt entirely to chance; though, as all men are to be completely equal, and have no wants which each cannot gratify, it would perhaps

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have been difficult to have formed any conſiſtent plan of education; ſince it muſt have comprehended the purchaſe of the exerciſe of talents, which would doubtleſs have been hereſy againſt the tenets of the ſyſtem. The principle, however, of the abolition of an excluſive ſexual intercourſe is the ſame in both; for the theory of the one, and the practical ſyſtem of the other, aim in this inſtance at the ſame effect, though purſuing different means—that of tearing aſunder and deſtroying the ties of private affection, for the purpoſe of ſubſtituting in their ſtead the chains of public good.

The two ſyſtems thus appear to meet in three points, forming the baſe upon which they mutually reſt for ſupport; the two laſt auxiliary, but powerfully aſſiſtant, to the firſt, which is the avowed principle and end of the Lacedemonian ſyſtem; and which is likewiſe the principle of the Godwinean theory; for, though apparently exhibited upon a more extenſive ſcale, yet it is the ſame in effect, and tends to the ſame end, if rationally carried into practice.

There are others in which the two ſyſtems ſeem materially to differ; but, upon examination, that difference will be found to exiſt more in appearance than in reality, and to ariſe from the diſſimilar circumſtances of the two periods.

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A very material difference apparently exiſts relative to ſlavery, which is admitted into the ſyſtem of Lycurgus, whilſt it is abhorred by the theory of Godwin. The difference ariſes from the diſſimilitude of the periods in which the two ſyſtems were brought forth: Lycurgus, convinced he could not eſtabliſh that perfect equality he wiſhed for, if ſome were obliged to labour for the benefit of others, was compelled to have recourſe to ſlavery, as the only means left to ſupport and uphold the unnatural ſtate of ſociety he had inſtituted; and the unfortunate Helots felt it to be a truth, that men at the ſame time can be cruelly tyrannic and haughtily free.—Godwin, perceiving the incongruity of ſlavery and freedom, and well aware that it would have been inconſiſtent with his perfect ſtate of equality, if one man laboured for another; beſides having a tendency to deſtroy it in the end, by the accumulation reſulting from induſtry, ran into another extreme, equally as abſurd, that every man ſhould provide himſelf, by his own labour, with all the neceſſaries of life, and be himſelf the means of gratifying his wants. It is curious to obſerve the ſtriking ſimilarity between the ſyſtems, which ariſes out of this apparent difference: the Spartan carried into practice the principle of ſlavery, for the purpoſe of continuing the Lacedemonians in a ſtate of equality.

Vaſſalage was then common; and no better expedient could be deviſed to preſerve his ſyſtem, as, from its avowedly confined operation, a neceſſity exiſted of making the free inhabitants ſoldiers, to defend the ſtate againſt the encroachments of neighbouring and hoſtile communities. If every one had been obliged to cultivate his own land, and provide himſelf with all the neceſſaries of life, there would not have remained to him, in the infancy of the arts, the ſmalleſt portion of time to devote to the diſcipline and duties of war; and this nation of cultivators would have been an eaſy prey to the firſt invader: nor would he have been able to aſſiſt in the legiſlative or executive departments of the ſtate; he would have been, indeed, very nearly a ſavage, and it was only the inſtitution of ſlavery that prevented him from ſinking into a ſtate of barbariſm. Godwin, who only limits his ſyſtem by the bounds of the univerſe, and appears to ſet at defiance the feuds and rivalry of petty ſtates, to avoid the inconſiſtency of ſlavery united to freedom and equality, which, though common in the ages of antiquity, would have appeared glaringly abſurd in the preſent day, had recourſe to one of the wildeſt chimeras that ever entered the brain of man,—the omnipotence of mind over matter. By means of this, each is to provide himſelf with all the neceſſaries

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demanded by his condition, whilſt the required labour is almoſt reduced to nullity, and conſumes but a very trifling portion of his time and attention. This ſuppoſition, although ſaid to have originated with a man of philoſophical eminence, muſt ſurely be conſidered a ſtretch of imagination beyond the bounds of probability; for mind being, by the condition of its preſent ſtate of exiſtence, united to, and interwoven with, matter, muſt be, whilſt that union exiſts, in ſome degree ſubject to its laws, and never can become omnipotent over it. By the title of deity, we underſtand mind in a pure ſtate, ſuperior to, and unconnected with, matter, and which doubtleſs poſſeſſes and exerciſes that omnipotence. The ſame ſtate of ſociety, however, is ſought to be eſtabliſhed by both ſyſtems, each running into abſurdity, for the purpoſe of endeavouring to counteract the wiſe purpoſes of the Deity, who has ſo conſtructed mankind, that inequality will always ariſe, from the different degrees of talent poſſeſſed by different minds: a fact too evident to be denied by the advocates of the new ſchool; and which their hypotheſis, ſuppoſing it to be produced by external circumſtances, very lamely accounts for; and that ſubjection will conſtantly exiſt between the weak and feeble many, and the decided and energetic few: for, however the doctors of mo-

dern philoſophy may imagine, they have only to enlighten the maſs of mankind, by giving them an ample portion of information, and teaching them to think and reaſon, and their buſineſs is done, and equality eſtabliſhed; yet, it is not reaſoning alone will render their conduct wiſe and prudent, but a certain deciſion and energy, which education has not the power to confer, and which falls to the lot of a very ſmall part of that immenſe maſs.—Theſe decided characters will always have an aſcendency over the multitude; and it is only the prompt vigour of a well-balanced government that can prevent mankind from becoming ſlaves, through the medium of equality, to the moſt rigid deſpotiſm: each of theſe politicians endeavouring to deſtroy the beautiful pyramid of ſociety, for the purpoſe of ſubſtituting a rolling ſtone, or a ſhapeleſs block. The principle, therefore, is the ſame, the only difference between them being the means made uſe of to carry that principle into effect.

Another point there is, of very eſſential importance, on which the two ſyſtems appear to be oppoſed to each other, I mean coercion. Lycurgus was under the abſolute neceſſity of eſtabliſhing a military government, with all the requiſite apparatus of coercion, for the purpoſe of keeping up and maintaining the ſyſtem he had erected, forming the peo-

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ple into a compact body of ſoldiers, capable of defending their freedom and their laws. The theory of Godwin admits not of conſtraint; but whilſt it is oppoſed to actual coercion, allows and countenances a force of the moſt deſpotic nature, the tyranny of public opinion and public cenſure: this is to be exerciſed, under the ſyſtem of equality, againſt every man who ſhall dare to accumulate wealth; againſt every man who ſhall dare to oppoſe the tenets of the doctors of equality; and againſt every man who ſhall dare in the leaſt to deviate from the path laid down for him by the rule and line of dull Uniformity. According to this ſyſtem of philoſophy, it is true, man is not to be compelled to purſue any ſpecific maxims of conduct by a bayonet planted at his breaſt, nor is he to atone for erroneous opinions by immerſion in the gloom of a dungeon: but what then? it is only changing the mode of operation, whilſt the principle remains the ſame; every man who utters a ſentiment inconſiſtent with the orthodoxy of the temple of equality, is to be hunted down by a pack of opinions, embodied and kept together for the purpoſe by the huntſmen of modern philoſophy, until, tired and breathleſs with the conteſt, he is forced to ſubmit to the perſeverance of obſtinacy. It requires a degree of fortitude which few

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poſſeſs, to withſtand the torrent of opinion expreſsly uttered to diſapprove of their conduct, and a number of individual ſentiments, even though a minority of the whole, may be concentrated into one focus, and then directed againſt the ſmall maſſes of oppoſite reaſoning lying ſcattered before it, melting away each, until the whole is reduced to an uniform conſiſtence. Perſeverance will frequently make Wrong triumph over Right, and render Error paramount to Truth, from the mere force of Union directed againſt diſſipated Strength. That this is the ſpirit of the ſyſtem, relative to the uſe of force, muſt be evident to any one who coolly and diſpaſſionately conſiders it; and there is no tyranny more odious, no coercion more forcible; for the mind, wearied by repeated and ſyſtematic attacks, at laſt becomes a convert, or quits the field in deſpair, feeling a ſlavery in its inmoſt receſſes, the more degrading becauſe exerciſed by chains emanating from its own ſubſtance. Thus both agree in the uſe of force and coercion, openly avowed by the one, is but diſguiſed in the other, and therefore poſſeſſes a greater degree of power.

There is a diſſimilarity in the ſyſtems, relative to the public meals, eſtabliſhed by Lycurgus, of which each citizen was compelled to partake, not being allowed to eat in private; this forms no part

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of the theory of Godwin, nor is it there of any importance; for as every one according to that theory muſt exiſt upon thoſe articles of food which are immediately produced by the exertions of his own induſtry; it is highly probable that man, thus circumſtanced, would be frequently contented, from the impulſe of indolence, with the herbs of the field, and the water of the brook.

Parental duties are denied by both ſyſtems, except the firſt nutriment given to the child by the mother can be called ſuch, which appears to be an act of animal inſtinct rather than enlightened reaſon. Education, regularly eſtabliſhed in the Lycurgean ſyſtem, forms no part of the Godwinean; yet both are conſiſtent, and proceed on the ſame principle. The proceſs of tuition eſtabliſhed in Sparta, conſiſted almoſt entirely of thoſe exerciſes which fitted its citizens for martial employments, and which conferred upon them a ſtrength and vigour of body capable of ſupporting the fatigues of war. Lacedemon was from neceſſity a military ſtate, and thus a warlike education was given to the inhabitants, that the exiſtence of the ſtate might be continued and prolonged. The theory of Godwin, having caſt off all government, military as well as civil, could not conſiſtent with itſelf admit any regular plan of education; for where no fruit is required,

quired, it is not neceſſary to ſow ſeed; and thus it is referred to any one who, without gratuity or reward, will take the trouble upon himſelf.

It was the aim of Lycurgus to perpetuate his ſyſtem, by a regular courſe of education, calculated to eradicate individuality of character, and peculiarity of intellect, and prevent the formation of affectionate connexion, or friendly union, making each man merely a citizen and ſoldier, ready to act in either capacity, from the impulſe of mechanical diſcipline. That the theory of Godwin is carried to a chimerical extent, and, upon being practiſed, would end in a ſyſtem ſimilar to that eſtabliſhed by Lycurgus, and a proceſs of education nearly the ſame, there can be little doubt; but, extended as it appears, no plan of tuition regularly formed can be carried into practice; there is no end, the attainment of which can be looked forward to. In the preſent day man is fitted by the regular operations of a ſyſtem, formed for the purpoſe, to bear his part in ſociety with propriety and honour; but, according to this theory, he is to live by himſelf, and ſolely for his own gratification: little knowledge is required to underſtand this, and even that muſt be gained rather from obſervation, than the dictates of experience, as no temptation would exiſt to acquire or impart information.

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A few of the outlines of each ſyſtem have thus been delineated, and ſuch I conceive to be their identity, and the agreement between them, as to juſtify the concluſion, that the ſyſtem of Lycurgus and the theory of Godwin are founded upon the ſame principles, making every due allowance for the difference of their ſituation, the diſtance between the periods in which both ſyſtems were engendered, and the conſequent ſuperiority of knowledge and information poſſeſſed by the latter.

The two ſyſtems being identified, it remains to prove that the Lycurgean was injurious, and productive of evil effects to that portion of mankind ſubject to its influence and control; which, being done, it will neceſſarily follow, that the theory of Godwin has a ſimilarly noxious tendency towards mankind at large, whom it comprehends; and it will not perhaps be difficult to prove, likewiſe, that if it were poſſible to carry it into effect, in its utmoſt extent, it would be productive of more enlarged injury, and extenſive evil, by deteriorating the mind of man, by deſtroying the fabric of civilized ſociety, reared with ſo much care and anxiety, and hurrying mankind back to that ſtate of ignorance and barbariſm from which they firſt ſet out in their progreſs through the different ſtages of civilization.

The inſtitutions of Lycurgus had for their object and end to produce a complete uniformity of action, throughout the ſtate; making of the whole nation one individual, having but one mind and one ſyſtem of conduct, each citizen acting implicitly for the general welfare, according to the dictates of the government, which managed and directed the whole, being reſtrained by no ties of a limited nature, which could turn him aſide from the general principle. This they effected by annihilating thoſe affections producing that inferior ſpecies of local attachment which may be called the love of home, which ſometimes ſtands oppoſed to the love of country; and though it may not operate where imminent danger threatens the community, to prevent a general union, for the purpoſe of endeavouring to avert the calamity, yet will frequently throw inſuperable obſtacles in the way of a government, when actually endeavouring to benefit the nation; for a private individual muſt feel the advantages reſulting from a meaſure within his own circle, or not experience any material loſs from its operation, before he can be induced warmly to ſupport, or refrain from oppoſing it; by the abolition of wealth, to accumulate which mankind adopt a ſyſtem of conduct, ſometimes contrary to, and very frequently independent of, the intereſts of the community,

munity, but always generating ſelfiſh opinions, wholly repugnant to a diſintereſted union with others; by excluding the acquiſitions of knowledge, and the attainments of ſcience, which neceſſarily chain many men to purſuits of a calm and contemplative nature, engendering reflections of a tendency completely oppoſite to the mental mechaniſm required by thoſe inſtitutions, at the ſame time fruſtrating their object by the diverſification of intellect, which that knowledge and thoſe attainments certainly produce, for their end would undoubtedly have been defeated by the cultivation of philoſophy and the ſciences, literature and the arts; this would have enlarged the minds of the Lacedemonians, and ſhewn them the degraded ſtate to which they were fallen; and, but to have ſeen it, would have been emancipation from its trammels, and would have diſplayed and brought into action the hidden reſources and diſtinctive character of each individual intellect, forming a variety highly offenſive to the uniformity they laboured to eſtabliſh, and cauſing an extenſion of mind, which would have been treaſon againſt the maſſive dullneſs that reigned deſpotically over the underſtandings of the Spartans; and by continually preſenting to minds, thus bereft of affection, the deſire of wealth, and poſſeſſion of knowledge, the benefit and welfare of the commu-

nity as the ſupreme good. This conſtantly impreſſed upon the mind, from infantine imbecility to mature age, generalized its emotions, and rendered it alive to nothing but the joys and the pleaſures, the anxieties and the perturbations which peculiarly belonged to the whole community. It was previouſly rendered vacant, and then a ſubject for action preſented, which immediately, from that circumſtance, there being no other object of attention, took faſt hold of its powers and faculties, abſorbing every trait of individuality, and producing a forced and unnatural uniformity, which annihilated thoſe peculiarities of intellect, that form the diſtinguiſhing marks of different ſpecies of minds, and depreſſed and ſtifled the energies of genius, with the ſingle exception of military talents, which now and then ſhone forth with ſingular ſplendour, amidſt the continued darkneſs that enveloped and ſurrounded them. Had genius been ſuffered to exert itſelf, its eruptions would ſoon have laid waſte the inſtitutions reared with ſo much care, throwing a light into the gloomy minds of the Spartans, which would ſoon have ſhewn them the way to break aſunder the chains, that linked them faſt to the chariot wheels of the ſtate. Their meals being conſtantly eaten, their exerciſes performed, and the greater part of the trivial pleaſures, and petty habits

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of life, being enjoyed and practiſed in company with each other, contributed ſtill farther to ſtrengthen and confirm that ſameneſs of mind and diſpoſition, which thoſe inſtitutions laboured to eſtabliſh.

The effect which a ſyſtem thus carried into practice had upon the Spartan nation, exhibits an important leſſon to future legiſlators and future philoſophers. That the Lacedemonians were arbitrary and tyrannical—barbarous, unfeeling, and inhuman, in their conduct towards others, no one can deny: their cruel and deſpotic treatment of the unfortunate Meſſenians, delivered over to their power by the chance of war, whom they robbed and enſlaved, uninfluenced by the dictates of ſenſibility, or the ſentiments of humanity, ſhowered upon them every indignity that is poſſible for human nature to endure. Their more than ſavage behaviour to the miſerable Helots, and the ſanguinary murders they committed amongſt that unhappy race, which bear the broad ſtamp of the moſt unfeeling cruelty, and plainly ſhew them to have been devoid of the loweſt degree of feeling that can be dignified with the name of humanity. Theſe murders evidently aroſe from that doctrine of utility ſo ardently inculcated by modern philoſophers. The legiſlators of the old ſchool forming a plan of general benefit,

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having found that deliberate murder muſt be committed to carry it into effect, would conſider it as an effectual bar to the further proſecution of the ſcheme, and would not have been the means of deliberately ſhedding the blood of their fellow creatures for the ſake of any principle upon earth.—Thus has ariſen the maxim, that it is better for twenty guilty to eſcape than one innocent man ſuffer unjuſtly; but the Spartan legiſlator had no ſuch qualms; he coolly and deliberately ſacrificed every feeling, and every virtuous ſympathy, for the purpoſe of delineating and compleating the harſh outline of general utility, and viewed deliberate murder only as the means by which that purpoſe was to be more completely effected. Theſe facts bear ample and abundant teſtimony to the truth of the aſſertion. That they were haughty, arrogant and uncomplying, is equally well known, ſince it became almoſt proverbial. That they were ignorant reſulted from the very ſpirit and letter of the Lycurgean ſyſtem; and can there be a greater proof of its evil and injurious tendency thān that, for ſeveral continued ages, it kept the human mind at a ſtand, though rather deteriorating than fixed, by excluding every ray of ſcience, of improvement, and amelioration, that could enliven and illuminate the dark and inſpiſſate gloom: thus unnaturally

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contravening one of the declared purpoſes of the Deity, that mankind ſhould be in a conſtant ſtate of progreſſion and improvement.

The Lacedemonian, held by no tie of private affection, and continually inquiring only how his country might be benefited by his actions, with ſanguinary cruelty aſſiſted in murdering the miſerable Helots, particularly thoſe who diſplayed any ſuperiority of mind, and ſhewed themſelves to be above the ſtate in which injuſtice had placed them, for the purpoſe of preventing that degraded body of men from becoming too numerous, and alſo from forming and executing plans, through the means of the higher degree of talent poſſeſſed by ſome, which might have delivered them from their enſlaved condition, and ejected their maſters from the lofty ſituation they had unjuſtly uſurped.—Every freſh murder aſſiſted to blunt whatever portion of feeling remained in his breaſt, whilſt the gentle ſtimulus of ſympathy was wanting to ſharpen and give it a new edge. Thus a ſavage ferocity was engendered and perpetuated in his mind, the more dreadful, and the more injurious to the human character, becauſe eſtabliſhed upon principle. It is well known a continued repetition of ſcenes of calamity and diſtreſs will render callous the moſt irritable feelings, and dry up the tearful ſources of

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the moſt acute ſenſibility. That the Lacedemonians ſhould retain humanity when in the daily habit of committing the moſt deliberate and wanton murders, would have been indeed a phenomena in the hiſtory of mankind. He might be brave—he might be courageous—but humanity he had not, much leſs ſenſibility or fine feeling; and, unaccuſtomed to any ſoftneſs by which the ferocity of courage might have been tempered, a lofty haughtineſs aroſe and became a part of his character.

Spartan virtue has been boaſted of and admired, but in what did it conſiſt? The mildneſs of benevolence and the amiability of ſocial life were baniſhed from the ſtate, and nothing left behind but a cold unfeeling ſelf-denial. That virtue ſo much boaſted of, ſolely concentred in the love of their country, ſacrificing every affection relating to the individual to the public good. This, then, was, in fact, the vice of their character, artificially implanted, by eraſing thoſe ſympathies which humanize the man; for if virtue merely conſiſts in a love of country, or an endeavour to promote the general utility, whilſt the paſſions are left ſolely to the control of taſte, then it is poſſible for a man to be virtuous, and yet a peſt to ſociety, which is an abſurd paradox: either virtue is compriſed in the

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regulation of the paſſions, and doing unto others as thou wouldſt they ſhould do unto thee, or elſe it is an air-built theory, only calculated to pleaſe the ear whilſt it corrupts the heart. The principle of the Spartan legiſlator, and that of the Godwinean ſchool, tend together and in uniſon to this end; for whilſt man is contemplating in the one the broad level of general utility, and in the other the vaſt expanſe of univerſal good, he conſiders his own acts, in the ſmall circle where he is forced to move, as of little conſequence in ſo grand a ſcale of action; and, having no principle to refer to for the government of his paſſions but the dictates of taſte, becomes really vicious whilſt he is abſtractedly virtuous. The human mind riſes from the contemplation of kindred and friends to that of country, and thus conceives juſt ſentiments relative to the duties of its different ſituations: affection and friendſhip then take their proper ſtations, and have their due influence on human conduct: benevolence then plays about the heart, and each man, as far as his ſphere of action will allow, benefits his ſpecies. But here this natural and beautiful order is reverſed; the community is the firſt object of contemplation preſented to the dawning of infant reaſon; the Loves, the Sympathies, and the Affections, are ſtrangled in their cradle, and the

being thus educated becomes a citizen, but ceaſes to be a man.

That the Lycurgean ſyſtem was injurious to that portion of mankind upon which it operated there can be no doubt, ſince it put a ſtop to every ſpecies of improvement, and pinioned down the intellectual faculties of the Lacedemonians to certain fixed points of inveſtigation, or rather of bare contemplation, from which a continued ſameneſs of reflection could alone be derived, whilſt the inhabitants of ſurrounding ſtates took a diſtant flight into the regions of ſcience and literature, and brought away ſpoils which at once adorned and enlarged their minds, and conferred upon them as great a ſuperiority in the benign arts of peace, as the Spartans enjoyed in the mechanical diſcipline of war. The progreſſion of improvement was diametrically contrary to its inſtitutions; for, had that been allowed, they muſt ſoon have fallen to the ground, thrown down by the force of increaſed knowledge. Thoſe who erect and ſupport a ſyſtem upon principles at variance with right reaſon and ſound judgment, muſt of neceſſity endeavour to prevent the excurſions of intellect, beyond the point at which its variations were then fixed; and thus Lycurgus endeavoured to perpetuate ignorance, for the purpoſe of engrafting thereon prejudice, and thereby

thereby ſecuring the permanence of his inſtitutions, which reſted for ſupport upon principles and ſentiments inſtilled into the mind, and remaining there, wholly independent of the rational faculties, and deſpiſing their dictates. Had all the governments of the world been formed according to the Lacedemonian model, the human mind would have been, at this day, ſo debaſed and degraded, as hardly to bear the fainteſt reſemblance to the divine original from whence it ſprung. The dearth of art and ſcience, of knowledge, and of literature, which the Spartan ſtate exhibits during ſo many ages, is a ſufficient ſpecimen of what would have been the conſequence had ſuch a ſyſtem univerſally prevailed. The Lycurgean inſtitutions were at laſt overthrown by a foreign force, and had they been generally eſtabliſhed, it is difficult to conjecture how long they might have endured; they might even have continued to the preſent period, by means of the diſciplined mechaniſm of mind they engendered, preventing us from aſcending in the ſcale of improvement, and nearly reducing us to the condition of mere animal exiſtence.

Spartan courage and patriotiſm has been extolled beyond meaſure, and without reaſon, for they were merely the mechanical effect of the Lacedemonian laws and inſtitutions, which prevented any tender

recollection from diſturbing their minds in the hour of battle, or any private ſympathies drawing them away from the contemplation of the community; whilſt true courage and true patriotiſm can only be founded upon the conviction of the judgment that it is neceſſary to ſacrifice a part for the purpoſe of preſerving the whole.

It may now be ſaid, perhaps, that in attempting to prove the inſtitutions of Lycurgus productive of cruel tyranny and haughty arrogance; of barbarous ferocity and gloomy ignorance; I have effectually proved that they cannot be identified with the ſyſtem of Godwin, which inculcates univerſal benevolence and enlarged knowledge. To this I anſwer, that the Godwinean ſyſtem, in endeavouring to graſp all, graſps nothing, unleſs a middle path is choſen, through which the benefits propoſed by it may be practically carried into effect. That man can do good to his ſpecies, by his own ſole and independent exertions, is a propoſition too abſurd for attention. By himſelf he is helpleſs, and in almoſt every act of his life receives the co-operation of others; he cannot feed or clothe himſelf, without the aſſiſtance of others, being manifeſt in the proviſion of the materials; he cannot feel himſelf ſheltered from the pitileſs ſtorm, without being conſcious of the joint labours of others for his

his uſe; he cannot inſtruct or amuſe himſelf by the peruſal of a favourite author, or embody his own thoughts upon paper, without feeling himſelf in the ſame manner indebted to the co-operations of others; take away this diviſion of labour, and in the preſent ſtate of the arts you reduce man to the condition of a ſavage; for then all his time would be ſwallowed up in the exertions neceſſary to ſupport life, and render exiſtence comfortable. This diviſion of labour conſtitutes the principal difference between a ſavage and civilized ſtate; and Godwin, whilſt he conſiders it as the product of injuſtice, and an erroneous ſtate of ſociety, for the purpoſe of preventing that barbarity which muſt immediately follow its abolition, has recourſe to the omnipotence of mind over matter; by which I ſuppoſe he means, if he means any thing, that a man ſhall touch one ſpring, and cultivate his land without further trouble; another, and build a houſe; another, and make his clothes; and another, and write a book. But however this may be, it is evident man cannot actively promote the general good, without the aſſiſtance and co-operation of others; and thus an aſſociation muſt be formed for the purpoſe of carrying this ſyſtem into effect. An aſſemblage of this nature, containing within its boſom all the inhabitants of the globe, is an idea embracing the oppoſite extreme,

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and equally abſurd with the other; by what philoſophical proceſs of amalgamation are the diſcordant inhabitants of the five zones to be made to act in uniſon together? and by what enlightening methods are their oppoſite and contradictory prejudices to be diſſipated and deſtroyed? There only remains that middle path, by which alone the theory can be carried into practice; and ſeparate aſſociations muſt be formed of the inhabitants of different climes, for the purpoſe of carrying this benevolent ſcheme into execution, and exalting the happineſs of each individual to the higheſt acmé of perfection. Theſe diſtinct communities will of neceſſity have different ideas of the public good. Nature has placed barriers between the opinions and habits of the inhabitants of diſtant climates and parallels, which all the attacks of modern philoſophy will never be able to break through. The weak and imbecile reſident of the torrid zone, will never poſſeſs the vigour and energy of him who enjoys the bleſſings of the temperate; nor will the latter ever become the half-formed, half-animated being of the frigid. The mind of him who is fainting beneath a vertical ſun, will never become analogous to the mental talents of him who is only expoſed to its oblique rays; nor will the ſenſations and compariſons of the reſident of the arctic pole,

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be conſentaneous with his who inhabits the middle regions. Each aſſociation muſt thus confine its operations to the individuals that compoſe it; without endeavouring to comprehend the ſphere within its graſp, and muſt therefore appoint delegates to ſuperintend its concerns and manage its intereſts; for it is evident a government of ſome kind muſt be eſtabliſhed, or no ſettled plan of public utility can be formed and carried into execution. A government eſtabliſhed upon theſe principles, muſt conſtantly and ſolely have in view the general good, all its acts tending to this alone: but the co-operation of individuals who compoſe the ſtate is wanting:—a citizen is commanded to put an end to the exiſtence of his father, becauſe a feeble and helpleſs old man is a burden to the community—he heſitates—he refuſes—affection and ſenſibility ſtand in the way and prevent him. The beloved wife of another is in danger of experiencing a premature death, by a ſudden accident; but the ſame danger involves the exiſtence of a citizen of ſplendid talents and exquiſite mental attainments, whoſe exertions are of infinite ſervice to the ſtate; the huſband can ſave only one, and flies upon the wings of love, to prolong the life of the dear object of his heart: but no, exalted benevolence knows nothing of love, you muſt ſave him whom you know

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not, who is perhaps your perſonal enemy, in preference to her whom your ſoul adores, and with whoſe happineſs your own is intertwined. Love, affection, and ſenſibility, then, militate againſt this philoſophical government, and therefore, love, affection, and ſenſibility muſt be aboliſhed and annihilated. How is this to be effected? By putting an end to the matrimonial contract, and inſtituting a promiſcuous intercourſe of the ſexes: for this will effectually eradicate every ſymptom of love, by taking away the children from their father, and after having received animal nutriment from the mother, turning them adrift, to receive education from whoever will trouble himſelf about it; for this will completely annihilate every trace of affection between child and parent; and love and affection once turned off the ſtage, a very ſmall portion of ſenſibility will be left behind, and that weak and debilitated, feeble and languid.

But this is not enough, a citizen rendered incapable, by diſeaſe, of providing himſelf with the neceſſaries of life, is conſequently conſidered as unfit to live;—why then did you ſhelter and ſupport him? Alas! he is my deareſt friend. Another, having neglected through indolence to cultivate his land, is left to ſtarve by himſelf;—you have ſinned againſt the ſtate, therefore, in ſheltering and giving him

him food. I did it becauſe he was my benefactor, and once ſaved me from immaturely periſhing.—Friendſhip and gratitude, therefore, contravene the decrees of refined philoſophy, and muſt exiſt no longer. You ought to prefer one man to another only in proportion to his ſuperior uſefulneſs, is their maxim, which completely overturns the temples of friendſhip and gratitude, and finally eradicates the ſmall remaining portion of ſenſibility.

Man, releaſed from the trammels of love and affection, of friendſhip and gratitude, and diveſted of ſenſibility, becomes then fit to be exerciſed as a paſſive ſpring in the national machine:—without a wife, without children, and without friends, he becomes a true citizen of modern philoſophy, acting his part in the drama of public utility.

That this is the ſpirit of what is called the modern philoſophy, no one will deny who has in the leaſt degree conſidered it. We are told expreſsly that marriage is founded in error, and productive of injurious conſequences; that there is no bond of union between child and parent, the former being unindebted to the latter, and the latter having no duty to perform to the former; that friendſhip is contrary to the principle of general utility, becauſe no man ought to be preferred but according to his

 uſefulneſs,

uſefulneſs, and that gratitude is a vice for the ſame reaſon.

We are told, too, that the ſacrifice of one individual is of no conſequence, if it is neceſſary to the general welfare. Yes, one man, and another, and a thouſand beſide, muſt be ſacrificed and deliberately murdered if this harſh unyielding principle of general utility require it. And this is what the advocates of the new ſchool are pleaſed to call juſtice;—this is the watch-word inceſſantly repeated againſt its opponents—How can a ſyſtem be wrong, how can it be productive of evil, ſay they, when it is founded upon immutable juſtice? Miſerable perverſion of words! Juſtice diſowns it, and is diametrically oppoſed to its tenets, for ſhe ſanctions the inſtitution of marriage, and demands that each man ſhould fix his affections upon one object, to the excluſion of others, and not rove about like a beaſt of the foreſt; and that he ſhould be grateful to his benefactor, whilſt ſhe brands him as odious who betrays the confidence of his friend. It is unjuſt that marriage ſhould not take place, and man be left to rove about at will; for then the peace of ſociety is diſturbed, and woman, equal in intellect to himſelf, degraded to a mere object of paſſion.—It is unjuſt that he ſhould not be grateful, for ſociety depends upon mutual aſſiſtance; and if men

experience

experience coldneſs or inſult inſtead of gratitude, kindneſs will be no more, and a community diſorganized and deſtroyed. It is unjuſt that man ſhould betray the confidence of his friend, becauſe, by the very terms of that friendſhip, he has implicitly and faithfully promiſed he would not; and if the moſt ſolemn promiſes are not to be kept, then away with every idea of juſtice, for that demands they ſhould be fulfilled, unleſs imperious circumſtances render it impoſſible, becauſe expectation has been raiſed, which, if diſappointed, an unhappineſs muſt enſue to the individual that juſtice denies to be its offſpring.

Art and ſcience, however, ſtill remain in this philoſophical community; but man can provide himſelf, by his own exertions, with food and cloathing and every other neceſſary of life. Of what uſe, then, is the ſtudy of the arts? He has now diſcovered the means by which the greateſt quantity of happineſs can be produced; of what uſe then is the contemplation of ſcience? Beſides, who will endeavour to ſtudy the arts, or contemplate ſcience, when all men poſſeſs an equal portion of land, to ſuffice for the purpoſes of exiſtence, without the power of increaſing the quantity; and if any one ſhould be induced by the throbbings of genius to try the experiment, who will labour to make his

works public, when from that labour no pleaſure can be derived, and profit can be turned to no uſe, all further flights into the regions of art and ſcience muſt therefore be, directly or indirectly, put a ſtop to.

The arts can only be cultivated for the purpoſe of making improvements in them, and ſcience ſtudied to make further diſcoveries: when the one can be improved no farther, and the other is completely known, there is evidently no longer an occaſion to apply the powers of the mind to either. Suppoſing, however, that this is not the caſe, and that there ſtill remains improvements and diſcoveries to make, which may become objects of inquiry and inveſtigation, this ſyſtem muſt of neceſſity be entirely hoſtile to ſuch diſcuſſions, becauſe its own exiſtence depends upon mechanically exerciſing the mental faculties in certain fixed paths, without ſuffering them to run wild in the boundleſs fields of examination and hypotheſis.

This enlightened philoſophy pretends, in its operation, to enlarge the mind, to render it more capacious and fertile, to ſharpen and render more acute its diſcernment, and heighten all its powers. Fallacious and deceptive pretenſion! The real effect muſt be, to ſhorten its excurſions, to narrow its path of inveſtigation, to deprive it of all confidence

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in itſelf, and render it feeble and inert; for when man contemplates the univerſe, or the globe which we inhabit, and mankind upon it, and views, at the ſame time, his own feeble exertions and narrow ſphere of action, he ſhrinks back confounded and abaſhed at his own inſignificance; but ſoon recovers his wonted confidence when he conſiders that he is making the beſt uſe in his power of the talent beſtowed upon him, and that where little is given little will be required. But tell him he has miſtaken his ſphere of action, and muſt continually have a regard to the abſtract principle of univerſal good, without allowing himſelf to be influenced by local attachments, and you bereave him at once of happineſs and confidence: he then ſees, with poignant regret, his own inſignificance in the ſcale of mankind, and, deprived of his proper circle of exertion, he ſhrinks back into himſelf, and deſpairing of being able to benefit his ſpecies, he effectuates nothing.

In this ſtate the powers and faculties ſtagnate, and can only again be put in motion by the ſtrong hand of the community, directing the exertions of each individual to the accompliſhment of what it chuſes to denominate the general good.

The mind of man, prevented from proceeding in the career of improvement, of neceſſity deterio-

rates;

rates; that one and only good, public utility, ſucked in by the infant with the mother's milk, and inculcated to the inſulated being, from infancy to childhood, and from childhood to mature age, becomes a prejudice, taking its peculiar tincture from the nature of the inſtitutions appertaining to the aſſociation of which he is a member. This prejudice, oppoſed to another of a neighbouring community, which perhaps has not been ſufficiently enlightened thoroughly to underſtand the principle of public good, forms a colliſion, emitting ſparks of benevolent hoſtility, the one pertinaciouſly refuſing to admit into its ſyſtem any greater portion of public good than is at preſent carried into practice within its territories, and the other as obſtinately perſiſting, out of pure benevolence, to put them in poſſeſſion of all that exalted happineſs which the invading nation enjoys at home. Thus will war find an entrance into the ſyſtem of enlightened philoſophy, and of courſe the previous qualifications of military exerciſes and military habits.

By the inſtitutions of Lycurgus, commerce and navigation were expreſsly excluded; the former, becauſe it would tend to the accumulation of wealth, and the latter, becauſe it would carry the inhabitants to foreign climes, where they would acquire a taſte for foreign opinions, and foreign luxuries, wholly

wholly incompatible with the inſtitutions they had left behind them. In the ſyſtem of Godwin, commerce is annihilated as a neceſſary conſequence for the ſame reaſon, and navigation muſt fall with it, from the univerſality the ſyſtem is intended to embrace.

Thus, from its very ſpirit and eſſence ariſes a number of inſulated nations, having no connexion with each other, and every one producing within itſelf the articles required by the individuals compoſing it, for their ſubſiſtence and comfort; a ſtate of ſociety exactly the ſame with that which would have reſulted from the eſtabliſhment of the Lycurgean inſtitutions throughout the globe; for under thoſe, the Lacedemonians were compelled to confine themſelves to the conſumption alone, of the produce of their ſmall territory, without being allowed to import any production whatever of a foreign ſtate. Each community reſting upon itſelf, and receiving neither neceſſaries or luxuries from others, there could be no amicable connexion between them, to ſerve as a bond of union and amity; for commerce is the link which unites mankind, by making them mutually dependent; and thoſe civilized nations who depend upon their own exertions alone, conſider themſelves as infinitely ſuperior to others, and diſplay in their behaviour to them,

them, an overbearing arrogance, and haughty contempt, arifing from that independence; unleſs a concurrence of other circumſtances renders them ſubmiſſive, by placing them under the influence of fear. The inhabitants of the earth, parcelled out into diſtinct and ſeparate aſſociations, having no friendly connexion, would ſoon become eſtranged to each other. The inhabitant of the mountain would have no inducement to deſcend into the plain; and navigation, rendered of no uſe by the deſtruction of commerce, being annihilated, the reſident upon iſlandic ſhores, would be completely ſeparated from the neighbouring continent. Adjoining nations, thus eſtranged, each under the influence of an excluſive principle, and animated by an excluſive ſpirit, would ſoon become hoſtile, conceiving the moſt inveterate prejudices, and entertaining the moſt rancorous animoſity againſt each other, from the difference of opinion, the haughty contempt, and obſtinate and contradictory prejudices which would of neceſſity be engendered and brought into action, without any mutual intercourſe or amicable ſentiments, capable of ſoftening their aſperity, and weakening their force.

Thus, however diſſimilar the Godwinean ſyſtem, and the inſtitutions of Lycurgus, may at firſt ſight appear, yet, when cloſely inveſtigated, they are found

found to be intrinſically the ſame: the former, if carried into practice, with a view to produce any real effect from its principles, muſt be executed in the ſame way, and by like means as the latter, producing a ſimilar ferocity, barbariſm, and arrogance, from the ſame cauſe, and in like manner diveſting man of his beſt affections and tendereſt ſentiments, and reducing him to the ſituation of mechanical force, aſſiſting to put in motion the great machine of the ſtate.

If the ſyſtem of Godwin does not mean this, it means nothing; for the extent to which it is carried belies its own principles, and renders them nugatory and abſurd. Let us ſuppoſe for a moment that it is carried into execution in its fulleſt extent, and that man is left to himſelf, without a government to control him, and without kindred or friends to lay hold of his affections, having diveſted himſelf of love and ſenſibility, of friendſhip and gratitude. We are now told, that in all his acts he muſt conſider and reverence public utility, and muſt conſtantly endeavour to benefit mankind. But how, in the name of wonder, is he to contribute to the welfare and advantage of his ſpecies, inſulated as he is, and without any means of acting, except for the purpoſe of procuring his own immediate ſubſiſtence and amuſement. Perhaps I

ſhall be told by the advocates for the ſyſtem, that man, in ſuch a ſtate as this, muſt be ſuppoſed ſo far advanced in happineſs and knowledge, as no longer to require united exertion, for the purpoſe of increaſing the ſtock of either. Impoſſible and chimerical. In this ſituation he would ſink into a ſtate of liſtleſſneſs and indolence, for want of ſome object in view, capable of intereſting the intellect, and rouſing it to exertion. Bereft of the tranquil happineſs ariſing from the gentle interchange of ſympathy, he becomes a prey to the moſt tormenting thoughts and uneaſy ſenſations; he feels a void in his heart which he finds it impoſſible to fill up. Solitude, without ſome future happineſs in view, which can enliven the preſent proſpect, is miſery: to alleviate this, there will be a continued deſire and conſtant effort. In the preſent ſtate of mankind, art and ſcience are the beſt companions to ſolitude, and conſolers of ſorrow; but in the condition delineated in this ſyſtem they would be of no uſe; the joys of affection and the conſolations of friendſhip, are equally denied:—what then remains? The gratifications of paſſion alone. The mind, uncontrolled by the limited monarchy of affection, ſinks into the anarchy of licentiouſneſs; and from thence ariſes only to be enſlaved by the deſpotiſm of the paſſions. His time is now

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divided between the languor of ſatiety and the turbulence of deſire; he is now become a ſervant to thoſe ſenſations he ought to have controlled; and uſes every means in his power for their gratification. Every hour is employed either in deviſing the means by which a little variety may be made to diverſify the ſatiety of appetite, and prevent the pleaſures of ſenſe from palling, in the moment of fruition; or in the actual gratification of the cravings of deſire; to that he looks forward, and flies with eager hope, for want of ſomething of a ſuperior nature, to engage the attention of his intellectual faculties. Thus would exiſt a number of men, without any government to curb their paſſions, and preſerve order, each, inſtead of exerting himſelf for the public good, or planning and executing ſchemes of public utility, confining himſelf to the means of gratifying animal appetites and ſenſual deſire, whilſt every day their minds would become ſtill more and more degraded, from the want of exertion and employment, and from the brutifying effects of the uncontrolled gratification of the paſſions, until they would become wholly incapable of any ſerious reflection, and theſe refined philoſophers would be undiſtinguiſhable from the animals they command, was it not for their riſible muſcles and erect form.

That this ſtate, even worſe than that of a ſavage, would be produced, there can be no doubt; the ſuppoſition that man ever can arrive at the *ne plus ultra* of happineſs, bears an abſurdity on the face of it: the moment he arrives at the end of thoſe means which have previouſly conſtituted his happineſs; the moment he has attained the ultimatum of his wiſhes, and has nothing left to deſire, that moment he becomes miſerable: his mind is as a chord, which ceaſes to vibrate, becauſe it ceaſes to be ſtruck, and lies inert and uſeleſs until it receives again a new impreſſion. But this ſyſtem, if carried to its utmoſt extreme, where it is even apparently ſeparated by a very flimſy veil from a ſtate of barbarity, labours to produce a condition in which nothing is left to be wiſhed or hoped for. Man is to become the deſpot of nature, in the poſſeſſion of all, without any thing farther to expect or deſire; each is to provide himſelf by means of his own labour, with all the neceſſaries and comforts of life; and, as he is then to be omnipotent over matter, that can employ but a ſmall portion of his time. What is he to do with the reſt? To employ it in cultivating the arts would be uſeleſs, they are already perfect; to ſtudy ſcience would be equally uſeleſs, for in ſuch a ſtate, or rather negation of ſociety, it could be of no poſſible benefit, for the progreſſive

diſcovery

diſcovery of its truths implies an accompanying degree of amelioration, and therefore here can be of no uſe, becauſe man is to improve no farther.—Add to this, that, ſuppoſing it beneficial, there would be none to labour in the ſubordinate departments of literature; and if, as man is to be omnipotent over matter, he could write, print, and publiſh his works himſelf, there would exiſt no temptation to induce him to ſuch an act, ſince it would be conſidered as the performance of nothing more than his duty, and not the ſlighteſt breath of fame would attach to his memory, fame being a ſpecies of gratitude, and gratitude a vice.

Thus, without any means of rationally employing his time, and being able to gratify with eaſe all the wants of nature, he would paſs it away between the turbulence of paſſion and the langour of indolence; and if he was now and then awakened to the thought of general utility, it would only be for the purpoſe of experiencing the moſt tormenting anxieties, having a taſk, and being wholly unable to accompliſh it. He may relieve his fellow creatures in diſtreſs;—he may be a dutiful ſon, an affectionate huſband, a good father, and a faithful friend; he may regulate his paſſions, and actively promote the purpoſes of utility; but for man to ſuppoſe his mind capable of graſping univerſal benevolence;

nevolence; able to weigh the exact quantity of good and evil in the balance of general utility, and form a juſt and unerring judgment from the reſult, is, indeed, the height of arrogance, and the extreme of pride. Why does he not at once ſet himſelf up for a Deity, and attempt to guide the planets and rule the univerſe? No, his mind is limited in its operations—is limited in its attachments; there is a ſomething grand and ſublime in the idea of univerſal benevolence, which overpowers its faculties, and makes it ſhrink within itſelf; which carries it up to the Deity on the wing of contemplation, but ſtimulates it not to exertion. For ſome time he views it with reverential awe, but it ſeems to his heart cold and inanimate, and ſoon he returns, with redoubled pleaſure, to that circle where he has been accuſtomed to exerciſe his feelings and his ſenſibility with facility and ſatisfaction.

There he finds himſelf at home; there he feels himſelf in unifon with his nature; and there he truly enjoys whatever portion of happineſs is the lot of man in this ſtage of exiſtence. That circle may be ſometimes too cloſely contracted; he may now and then be intereſtedly ſelfiſh, forgetting that, in referring all his actions to an immediate and temporary gratification, he ſacrifices to that his permanent happineſs and peace of mind. This is undoubtedly

undoubtedly contrary to the principles of morality, and the dictates of right reaſon, and forms an extreme exactly oppoſite to that of univerſal benevolence. Theſe, like all other extremes, very nearly approach; for the latter, by expanding the mind far beyond its actual extent, cauſes it to fly back with increaſed force, and powerfully contract itſelf as much within its natural limits as before it was unnaturally ſtretched. The man truly ſelfiſh, and he who pretends to be influenced by general utility, are the ſame in practice, the one only purſuing a circuitous route to that point to which the other advances by a path ſtraight and direct; the one immediately graſps his object, whilſt the other makes a ſhort excurſion into the wide circle of mankind, and then returns back tired and diſappointed, recurring to ſelfiſh gratification as the only means of alleviating the miſery which poignantly aſſails him on all ſides. It is not always poſſible for man to place himſelf in that ſituation where he can perform the greateſt degree of good his powers and faculties will admit of: but better is it he ſhould glide down the rivulet of ſocial life, even though it be more narrowed than it ought, than embark upon the vaſt ocean of univerſal benevolence, where he muſt be ſhipwrecked and daſhed helpleſs upon its ſhores.

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Rendered incapable of enjoying what may be more peculiarly denominated intellectual pleaſure, or of employing the mind, he would neceſſarily be driven to have recourſe to amuſements of a corporeal nature, for the purpoſe of whiling away that portion of his time which was not conſumed by ſleep, and the exertions requiſite to procure the neceſſaries of life. In what does this ſtate differ from that of a ſavage, whoſe mind is nearly quieſcent, and almoſt all whoſe pleaſures and pains are ſolely derived from the body? It may be ſaid, that the one has been previouſly enlightened, whilſt the other remains in total darkneſs: ſo much the worſe; light, not made uſe of for the purpoſes of diſcernment, confers no more actual benefit than the thickeſt gloom, while the intereſts of its Donor are fruſtrated and abuſed. Here enlightened philoſophy and ſavage barbariſm approach each other, almoſt to actual contact. In both ſtates mind is rendered ſubject to body: in the one from the greater utility of corporeal qualities, whilſt in the other a total inactivity of the intellectual functions gives the paſſions and appetites of the body a decided ſuperiority. But the ſavage enjoys the preeminence, for he is in a ſtate of improvement, whilſt the philoſopher, arrived at this higheſt pinnacle of happineſs, is conſtantly deteriorating.—

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The mind of the former is ſubject to his corporeal appetites, for a ſhort period, from the want of that knowledge which is continually increaſing, whilſt the latter is permanently enſlaved by his paſſions, from a ſatiety of intellect.

There is a difference, undoubtedly, between the two conditions, from the ſtock of knowledge poſſeſſed by one, and wanted by the other; but man, ſo far from rejoicing at being omnipotent over matter, would ſoon lament it; he would become tired of his deſpotic rule, and wiſh to be a little leſs arbitrary, for the ſake of enjoying a little variety: his commanding ſprings would no longer pleaſe; he would pant for bodily labour to preſerve him from wearineſs and melancholy; and, for the purpoſe of ending his wretched inactivity, actually recur to thoſe modes of action before exploded, which promiſed him a greater degree of work.—Another mode, rendering ſtill more labour neceſſary, would ſoon be adopted, merely from the impulſe of the love of employment, inherent in human nature; and to increaſe the work of the hands would ſoon become as favourite a ſtudy, as it is at preſent to ſubſtitute machinery. Thus mankind would deteriorate, until they arrived upon a level with barbariſm, only for the purpoſe of painfully retracing thoſe ſteps by which they had previouſly arrived

at the laſt ſtage of civilized refinement: for nothing is more evident, than that the mind cannot long ſtagnate, but muſt ſoon become better or worſe; and thus, when this refined ſyſtem of philoſophy is ſpun to its concluſion, man muſt of neceſſity become worſe, from the impoſſibility of improving. The ſuppoſition that he ever can arrive at ſuch a ſtate of exiſtence, is a wild and abſurd chimera—but the Godwinean theory has ſuppoſed it, and painted in glowing colours the happineſs which muſt enſue:—there it ſtops, and well it may—a little farther and the flimſy veil would have been torn off, diſplaying its naked deformity in all its diſguſting horrors. Its real aim, however, is ſufficiently evident; man is to be cajoled by the ſublime but fallacious idea of univerſal benevolence, and the allurement of an uncontrolled gratification of paſſion, for the purpoſe of being diſciplined into mechaniſm, and immerſed in a gloomy ſlavery, the more dreadful and permanent, becauſe operating through the medium of mind.

This may, perhaps, be conſidered by ſome as uſeleſs ſpeculation; but when it is recollected that a ſyſtem has been given to the world, dreſſed up in a faſcinating manner, and putting on the impoſing face of philoſophy, which contains beneath the barbed arrows of Vice and Unhappineſs, of Ignorance

rance and Barbariſm, ready to ſtrike its votaries with a ſure aim, when the maſk of Philoſophy is thrown away; it ſurely cannot be conſidered uſeleſs to attempt to expoſe its fallacy and detect its errors.

The principle of general utility, ſtated by Godwin, has been examined and condemned, by an author who lately wrote upon the ſubject (whoſe work I have not ſeen) and therefore I have lightly touched upon it; but nothing can be more evident than that man is really incapable of rationally acting upon ſuch a principle: if he were not, he would ceaſe to be man; for being diveſted of paſſion and ſympathy, affection and ſenſibility, his actions, at the ſame time, reſulting from the concluſions of reaſon, and ſteadily directed to promote the general good, he would become a being infinitely ſuperior in the ſcale of intellectual excellence. It appertains to the Deity alone, to act for the general good of mankind: it is he alone who can know what is capable of beſt adminiſtering to that end. But man is, for the wiſeſt purpoſes, chained here by his ſympathies and affections, which confine him to a circle of action ſmall and contracted; yet, where he is ſure of being able to effect ſome good; when he endeavours to eradicate theſe ſympathies and affections, and fly off from this circle upon the tangent

of univerſal benevolence, he ſets himſelf in oppoſition to his Creator, and aſpiring to be a ſuperior being, forgets he is man, and neglects to do that good, which it is in his power to perform, whilſt in the ſituation he has uſurped, he finds himſelf weak, imbecile, and uſeleſs. It may here be ſaid, that as the principle of univerſal good is acknowledged to belong to the Deity, and to influence his acts, it is unreaſonable to pourtray injurious conſequences as reſulting from its operation, when applied to the actions of man, ſince he is only endeavouring to act according to the model ſet before him in the government of mankind. But this apparent ſimilarity between the principles of action, anſwers not the purpoſe of defending the ſyſtem. Man is not able to form an unerring judgment of what is neceſſary to promote the general utility, and ought not to act upon his frail conceptions.—Suppoſing, however, he can form a juſt and deciſive opinion of what is requiſite to be done for the general good; he has no right to inflict evil upon an innocent individual, for the ſake of the public welfare, becauſe he has no compenſation to beſtow in return. We have every reaſon to believe that the Deity will, in a future ſtate of exiſtence, confer happineſs upon him who has ſuffered miſery, without incurring it by any crime. But man, frail man,

when he pretends to act upon this univerſal principle, can give nothing in return for the injury he inflicts, and therefore has no right to the exerciſe of ſuch a power: his actions muſt ſtill be influenced by his ſympathies and affections, for the purpoſe of being made to produce the leaſt good whatever to mankind.

It may be ſaid, that mankind being actuated by different partialities, a ſtate of warfare takes place in ſociety, from the frequent colliſion of oppoſite prejudices: but however plauſible and ſpecious this argument may appear, it poſſeſſes not force. If one had a circle of friends, whoſe opinions he could influence, to the injury of an inſulated individual, it might contain ſome degree of truth; but every one has his family connexions, his circle of friends and relatives, from which he derives the ſource of his happineſs: and thus, by ſuch a ſtate of ſociety, no man is really injured.

If man does not act from the ſtimulus of paſſion or affection, ſympathy or ſenſibility, or the influence of intereſt; how can he be otherwiſe induced to action? If he conceives for a female an ardent paſſion, which ſhe conſents to gratify by marriage, he ſtays not to confer with reaſon upon the event; that may ſpeak to him in a ſtill ſmall voice, but he treats the admonition with contempt and deri-

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ſion; he is actuated by paſſion, and paſſion alone, and to overcome its ebullition, the powers of rationality are totally incompetent. Wiſely is it ſo ordained, or he would reaſon himſelf out of all his paſſions, and die without having anſwered any of the ends for which he was created. If, without any of the turbulence of paſſion, he poſſeſſes for her a real affection and eſteem, it is not founded in reaſon, but in a certain ſympathy which he feels ariſe in his mind, without knowing why or how, and which, if circumſtances are favourable to its gratification, cannot be overcome by any efforts of the rational principle, though it may be diſapproved of by cool reflection. Let him ſeek for the moſt deſerving woman in the eye of reaſon, without paying the moſt diſtant attention to the caprices of affection, and years will glide away without a capability of making a choice; which, when made, from the want of mutual ſympathy, a diſtant coldneſs of behaviour will reſult, conveying nothing to the heart but unhappineſs and diſſatisfaction. The Godwinean ſyſtem appears to pay ſome ſlight attention to affection, ſince man and woman are allowed to cohabit together, ſo long as it will laſt between them: but this is a joke, he muſt give up his affection to the ſlighteſt breath of general utility that is blown againſt it; and muſt not dare to perſiſt

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in its caprices, when the public welfare demands its ſacrifice. It is eaſy to ſee that nothing is meant here but the gratification of appetite, diſguiſed under the maſk of affection.

Another is induced warmly to ſupport his friend in ſome arduous conteſt, where perhaps that aid is claimed by ſome perſon of much greater merit: but what then? Friendſhip conveys a pure pleaſure to the mind, and that pleaſure is increaſed by every mutual interchange of good offices. Let him throw aſide this partiality, to aſſiſt him who poſſeſſes a greater degree of merit, according to the authority of reaſon, and he daſhes the cup of happineſs at once to the ground, receiving nothing in return but the cold reflection of having adminiſtered to the general utility; though there is only a probability of his having ſo done, from the ſhort-ſighted nature of his faculties, and the weak powers of his comprehenſion. This is ſurely not the ſtate man was intended for; a benevolent Deity ordains that he ſhall receive happineſs by conferring it upon others; and only by that means can it be enjoyed tranquil and pure. There may be ſome taſtes ſo vitiated as to delight in the miſery of their fellow creatures, but they are few indeed, and are themſelves miſerable; whilſt, on the other hand, he who derives his happineſs from that which he

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confers upon others, increaſes his ſtock in proportion as he enlarges his ſphere of beneficence, until it arrives at a certain point, when, if he proceeds, it muſt decreaſe in an inverſe proportion. Doubtleſs he is bound to do all the good he can, as the condition of his exiſtence; but this he performs moſt ſurely and ſatisfactorily by confining himſelf within his circle of partialities, and acting through their medium: if he go beyond this, ſo far from increaſing the quantity reſulting from his conduct, he does leſs than he can; he becomes liable to be played upon by miſrepreſentation, and deluded by deceit; and, unable to detect the one, or penetrate the other, he frequently commits evil inſtead of performing good.

To fancy that, by extending his benevolent endeavours, he can benefit his ſpecies in a ſuperior degree, is forgetting the ſituation in which he is placed; he is merely an individual labourer in the vineyard, to whom is allotted a certain portion of work, as much as he can perform before the cloſe of day. If he does this, it is all he can do; it is all he is required to do; for if each performs his part, the whole work is finiſhed; if he attempts to do more, he only diſtracts his attention and weakens his ſtrength, and in the end really does leſs. To endeavour to act upon the principle of univerſal

benevolence

benevolence, and neglect the actual good it is in his power to perform, is quitting the ſubſtance to graſp at the ſhadow.

To ſuppoſe that man ever can rationally act upon the principles of univerſal benevolence, is ſuppoſing a groſs abſurdity; for the higher he aſcends in the ſcale of ſociety, and the larger his political ſphere of action, the more he is ſurrounded by the miſts of prejudice, which all the exertions of the ſtrongeſt reaſon are unable completely to diſſipate; and the leſs capable he becomes of forming a plan practically calculated to promote the general utility. However juſtly he may reaſon and form concluſions in the abſtract, yet, thwarted by the intereſts and prejudices of thoſe who ſurround him, upon whom he muſt depend for information and aſſiſtance, a ſcheme well conceived is frequently rendered abortive by bad management.

Placed in a ſituation of ſmaller importance to the general weal, and excluded from viewing the ſecret ſprings of the political machine, he is of neceſſity confined to that private circle from whence alone he can derive happineſs, which the world has not to beſtow, and where he finds full ſcope for the exerciſe of his feelings and ſenſibility; or elſe he muſt become a part of that machine, contributing mechanically to the general utility, without

being influenced by the dictates of reaſon. There is no alternative—to be in any degree uſeful to his ſpecies, he muſt confine that utility to a ſmall ſphere of action, or totally yield up his reaſon, and act mechanically, being put in motion, like a clock, by an extraneous impulſe, parting with the ſolid ſubſtance of happineſs, and graſping, in return, an airy phantom, productive of no ſolid ſatisfaction or real benefit.

He then gives up his own happineſs, and confers none upon others, but only contributes to increaſe their ſlavery. It is the fallacy of this refined ſyſtem, that whilſt it pretends to make man completely independent, it really chains him down a mechanical automaton; whilſt it pretends to give him unlimited freedom, it really plunges him into the moſt degrading ſlavery; whilſt it pretends to make him every thing, it really makes him nothing; it exhibits to the view a noble and towering edifice, elegantly ſimple, and beautifully grand, captivating to the ſight, and alluring to the ſenſes, but within all is darkneſs and horror, and the way-worn traveller finds himſelf chained down in a gloomy dungeon, ſolitary and ſad, when he had hoped, in aſcending to its roof, to enjoy the fineſt proſpects, and taſte the moſt exquiſite pleaſures.

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It pretends to pay the greateſt attention to the happineſs of every human being; when, if carried into execution, individual man is conſidered only as the duſt of the balance. It inveighs with acrimony againſt the barbarity and wickedneſs of immolating numberleſs beings, bearing the characteriſtics of humanity, to the caprices of a few, placed by chance at the helm of the political bark; whilſt itſelf, with unabating rigour and unfeeling cruelty, ſacrifices thouſands and tens of thouſands to the ideal and imaginary principle of public utility. It rings the changes upon public utility and immutable juſtice until Ignorance is ſtunned with the noiſe, and can no longer hear the accuſtomed voice of Reaſon.

That men, elevated to ſituations requiring of them to act with a view to the general utility, ought to purſue that line of conduct, whilſt ſo placed, there can be no doubt; they act in a double capacity, and the magiſtrate ought always to be ſuperior to the man. Not ſo the maſs of ſociety: the principle of public utility, continually acted upon, tends immediately to brutalize their feelings; for if it has a meaning, it is this, that the convenience and happineſs of the individual muſt be ſacrificed to that of the thouſand, and the intereſt of the thouſand to that of the million. They become habituated to ſcenes of the greateſt cruelty and diſ-

treſs, which are legalized by the public inſtitutions, and ſanctioned by the fundamental principles of the government. They muſt aſſiſt, without a murmur, to ſacrifice their neareſt relations, or ſtand an unconcerned ſpectator of the ruin and deſtruction of an innocent family, if either are deemed neceſſary to the general good. Unhappineſs and miſery meet their eyes, which this principle forbids them to alleviate, and tells them are only the variations of organized matter. Thus their feelings are blunted, and their minds rendered callous to thoſe impreſſions which lead the way to true and active benevolence.

The principle, however, thus harſhly thruſt forward, is not in reality the true theory of public good, for that confers the greateſt degree of benefit that can be diſpenſed to all, conſiſtent with the leaſt injury to any individual; and thus the happineſs of the few ſhall not be ſacrificed to that of the many, but the latter ſhall abate a ſmall portion to beſtow upon the former, and, as nearly as poſſible, equalize the balance.

Here lies the difference between what have been called the old and new ſchools of philoſophy; the former interweaving mankind together, making them mutually dependent upon each other, and giving to each individual a nearly equal degree of happineſs:

happineſs: the latter inſulating them, and deſtroying the comfort and welfare of a part, for the purpoſe of beſtowing a greater and unnatural portion of benefits upon the remainder. The one founds itſelf upon the amiable morality of chriſtianity; and that excellent maxim, do unto others as thou wouldſt they ſhould do unto thee, forms the corner ſtone of the foundation: whilſt the other derives its ſource, and draws its tenets and doctrines, from heathen philoſophy and pagan ſuperſtition. Yes, it is a conteſt between chriſtianity and paganiſm. Admit this ſyſtem of modernized ancient philoſophy, and you annihilate all the benefits, advantages, and virtues of chriſtianity, hurling us headlong and precipitous into that ſtate of dark barbariſm from which the benevolence of the Deity relieved mankind by the amiable and conſoling doctrines of chriſtianity.

The legiſlators of the old ſchool form the public good out of the materials ariſing from the happineſs of each individual; but the modern philoſopher abſurdly builds a ſyſtem, and then moulds and faſhions individuals to fill up its niches and ſuit its proportions. The one founds a baſe and regularly proceeds to the top of the pyramid; whilſt the other raiſes a point in the air, and then endeavours to jumble together materials to ſerve as a

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foundation whereon he may fix it. The one ſyſtem makes not a ſacrifice of any individual, unleſs it is clearly proved he deſerves the puniſhment about to be inflicted. According to this, guilt had better go unpuniſhed than innocence be falſely condemned: but the other ſcruples not to immolate one after another, to that which it chuſes to denominate the public good, and would rather puniſh innocence unjuſtly, than ſuffer to eſcape the leaſt particle of guilt.

This will give a fair and impartial trial to a few individuals, conſpiring againſt the welfare of the community; but that will baniſh to deſert ſhores a hundred at once, without the leaſt form of juſtice, and juſtify the act by the plea of public utility. The former will not force men to arm againſt their will, though an invading enemy threatens an hoſtile attack, but the latter will drive them from their families and their homes, and ſacrifice them by thouſands, to gain the point they aim it. One, when raiſing a ſum for the uſe of the community, will take a little from each, according to his circumſtances, and oppreſs no one; but the other will arbitrarily put in a ſtate of requiſition the property of this or that claſs of individuals, and forcibly take it away, to be employed for the purpoſes of public utility. The former will not compel any man to

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give up to the public his poſſeſſions, his talents, or his labour, without beſtowing upon him in return an adequate reward; but the latter will force him to part with his property, and ſacrifice his time, and the work of his hands, without returning the leaſt compenſation.

It cannot be too often impreſſed upon the mind, that in the modern ſyſtem public and private utility are at variance. Society aroſe from man, and not man from ſociety: but theſe philoſophers have abſurdly reverſed this natural order, and having firſt formed a community, then endeavour to connect him with this artificial ſtate, by a ſet of links equally the product of art: and thus they are compelled to annihilate affection and friendſhip, with every other ſympathetic emotion, to prevent this continued chain from being broken by an extraneous force.

Thoſe inſtitutions that do not grow out of circumſtances, never will be conſentaneous with the natural reaſon of mankind. A harſh uniformity diſguſts and diſpleaſes. Government muſt be the creature of man, and ſubject to be altered and changed according to the difference of his opinions at various periods, if he is to retain the exerciſe of his reaſon. But let him be the creature of government, educated according to its dogmas, and fitted

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to it by the rule and ſquare of uniformity, and then away with rationality, away with the characteriſtics of intellectual vigour and energy; he becomes inevitably enſlaved and chained down by prejudice.

It is the great advantage of the ſyſtem of what has been called the old ſchool, but which with more propriety may be denominated the medium between ancient and modern barbariſm, that it leaves man in the full poſſeſſion and exerciſe of his intellectual faculties, and likewiſe a capability of benefiting his ſpecies, or of centering his actions in ſelf gratification, according to the riſe or fall of benevolence, in the thermometer of his ſenſibility. But this modern antique ſyſtem allows him no choice whatever, but reduces him to a ſtate of infancy, and again puts on him leading ſtrings, without which, being held by the directors of public utility, he is not to walk, ſtir, or move; a certain train of thoughts are annexed to his mind, never to be altered, and a certain line of action to his conduct never to be changed.

Between the theory of Godwin, and the ſyſtem of Lycurgus, the ſimilarity is ſtriking and obvious. The former, it is true, is extended to an almoſt immeaſureable length, by carrying man, as it pretends, to the laſt ſtage of perfection, and the utmoſt bound of happineſs: beyond this it would not go,

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for then it muſt have ended in barbariſm. But this merely ſerves as a cover to its real deſigns: his omnipotence over matter, and complete independence, are chimeras, whilſt its object and end are to carry into execution the principle of public utility, through all the ramifications of ſociety, ſacrificing to that all the ſympathies of man, and rendering him a mechanical irrational being, under the pretence of improving his ſituation. What was aimed at by the inſtitutions of Lycurgus, and actually practiſed through their means, was the ſame. This principle was there executed in all its harſhneſs; man was rendered an alien to ſocial affection, and then chained to the community, without the power of regaining his freedom.

The principle of the two ſyſtems is the ſame, and muſt be carried into practice in a ſimilar manner; ſeparate aſſociations muſt be formed, which will exiſt ſo many Lacedemons, each actuated by an excluſive prejudice.

The ſubordinate means made uſe of by each, ſo clearly agree, as to leave little doubt of their identity. The annihilation of an excluſive intercourſe between the ſexes, and the affections leading to, and reſulting from it. The denial of parental duties, and the abolition of wealth, commerce, and navigation are common to both. Their difference is

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ſmall; coercion, openly uſed by the one, is only hid in the other; and is there more forcible, and of a more enſlaving tendency. Slavery is changed for an omnipotence over matter; which appears to be put in merely for the purpoſe of faſcinating the imagination, and gilding over the harſhneſs of the principle. In a community, formed upon this ſyſtem, every one muſt labour to procure his own ſubſiſtence, and with a greater degree of fatigue and wearineſs, becauſe it would be no longer divided. Education, regularly ſyſtematized by one, finds no place in the other, but this defect would ſoon be compenſated, upon its being carried into execution. The Lacedemonian ſyſtem would then be practiſed for the purpoſe of preparing each, to bear his part in the machine of public good. War, exploded by the exalted refinement of the modernized ſyſtem, it has been ſhewn, muſt, from the nature of the human mind, ſoon find an entrance through the portal of inſulated prejudice.

There is one point which has not been taken notice of where a difference exiſts between them: the ſuperſtition prevalent in the Spartan inſtitutions receives no countenance from the modern ſyſtem. That this alſo would ſoon find a place in a community conſtituted according to the dogmas of the latter, I have little doubt. It would grow out of

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the deterioration of the human mind. Chriſtianity once caſt off, mankind would ſink down into the barbariſm and idolatry from which they were elevated by its doctrines and morality. Theſe modern heathen philoſophers, know well that the chriſtian ſyſtem is inimical, and ſtands oppoſed to that which they endeavour to foiſt upon the world; and thus their exertions are conſtant and unremitted, to batter down its bulwarks, and undermine its foundation.

The mind of man is continually anxious concerning the future; he looks forward, urged by a kind of natural impulſe, beyond the preſent ſtate of exiſtence, and, if trained to habits of reaſoning and reflection, attains to a probability of the ſoul's immortality: but few are thus accuſtomed to exerciſe their mental faculties. By far the greater number cannot aſcend, through a continued chain of argument, until they arrive at this grand concluſion, but ſtill caſting a look beyond the extinction of life, they waver between hope and fear, between doubt and expectation. The every day operations of nature, are imputed to an immediate act of the Deity, and oblations are introduced to propitiate his wrath, and reſtore his benignity. The mind ſtill deteriorates, and, prone to contract every thing to the ſtandard of its own circle, imagines a number

of gods, each ſuperintending a ſmall ſphere of action, ſubordinate and accountable to the Deity of the univerſe, who is ſtill looked up to as the great ruler and preſerver of nature. But ſoon he is forgotten, and his oblations no longer thought of; their attention is abſorbed by thoſe inferior deities whom their imagination has created. In their hands, fancy perceives all the phenomena of nature, and to them prayers are addreſſed, and thankſgivings chanted. A ſet of men ſlowly ariſe, prompt and ready, to convert popular credulity to the purpoſes of their own emolument. Images are formed of theſe ſuppoſed deities, that there may be ſomething viſible to the eye which the vulgar mind can addreſs: miracles are coined, and divinity hedged around theſe productions of ſtone and wood, until the inviſible Being is no longer the ſubject of thought, and every particle of its worſhip and adoration, is transferred to its inanimate repreſentative.

Thus has the reaſon of mankind retreated to its loweſt ebb; and the flood tide of ſuperſtition gradually uſurped its ſhores, until chriſtianity ſtemmed the torrent, and put a ſtop to its depredations: and thus, under the influence of this modern pagan ſyſtem, will they deſcend again by the ſame ſteps, until

until they arrive at the bottom of the gulph of the moſt ſenſeleſs idolatry.

Mankind, placed under the influence of ſimilar cauſes, will proceed to like effects. Theſe philoſophers talk to us of ſuperior knowledge, and the enlightened ſtate of man, when this fine ſpun ſyſtem, even in its outer garment, nearly approximates, in colour and in ſhape, to the patch work dreſs of ancient ſuperſtition; for a temple is to be opened to receive the buſts of heroes and legiſlators, poets, and philoſophers, to whoſe memories, identified by the face of ſtone, reverence muſt be given; and how ſoon, in the courſe of a few fleeting years, reverence will become adoration, and the man be exalted to the Deity, thoſe who have ſtudied human nature need not be reminded.

Superſtition aroſe from the abuſes of chriſtianity, by nearly the ſame progreſſive ſteps as from pagan ignorance. The real truths, and the mild morality of the chriſtian religion were abſent in both—in the one not known; and in the other not uſed. The modern philoſophers, inveighing againſt the ſuperſtition that has ariſen from chriſtianity, have forgotten the medium, and run headlong into the oppoſite extreme. They have turned all their attention towards one gate of the fortreſs, guarding that with peculiar care and anxious precaution, whilſt they

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have left another wide open, through which the enemy ruſhes in, and takes full poſſeſſion of its citadel and outworks.

Thus the two ſyſtems agree even in this point, where they ſeemed moſt oppoſed to each other.—The effect reſulting from each muſt be the ſame; a trifling difference there may be in the appearance, but the body and ſubſtance bear the cloſeſt reſemblance.

The inſtitutions of Lycurgus produced a rigorous deſpotiſm, under the title of republican freedom; and from the Godwinean ſyſtem the ſame effect would reſult. Deſpotiſm has undoubtedly ariſen under the influence of the principles of the old ſchool, but no tyranny that ever exiſted upon the earth was ſo complete, ſo harſh and ſevere, and ſo degradatory to man, as was that of Sparta, and will be the ſlavery reſulting from the modernized philoſophy, whenever mankind are curſed by its execution. The deſpot of the ancient regimen ſtood trembling upon the top of a pyramid, anxiouſly taking every precaution for his ſafety, and continually fearful leſt he ſhould tumble from his giddy height, and be daſhed upon the rocks below: but the tyrant of the new ſtands firm upon a ſmall elevation, holding, by a ſecure chain, each individual, with which he directs his movements in his moſt

ſecret

ſecret receſſes, and when public utility commands, drags him to the focus of the tyranny, where he is cruſhed by the united weight of the community.—An endeavour has been made to carry its principle into effect in a neighbouring country, which has partly ſucceeded:—a public tyranny has ariſen, but the ſympathies of ſocial life have not yet been annihilated, and a medley has been produced, of the horrors of the one, and the amenities of the other.

Duplicity pervades the whole of the modern ſyſtem, and enters into its minuteſt ramifications. It pretends to increaſe the powers of man, and enlarge his ſphere of action, even unto univerſal benevolence, and narrows them to ſelfiſhneſs. It appears under the diſguiſe of enlightened philoſophy, whilſt gloomy ſuperſtition and organized barbariſm lurk beneath, and ſoon diſplay themſelves in all their horrors. It pretends to confer upon man the moſt unlimited independence, and chains him down by the moſt dreadful and degradatory ſlavery. It holds out the olive branch of peace, and ſtabs with the unſheathed ſword of war. It pretends to exalt his reaſon, and reduces him to mechanical motion;—tear off its diſguiſe, ſtrip it of its faſcinating dreſs and meretricious ornaments, and then nothing is ſeen but the barbaric and enſlaving inſtitutions of the

the Spartan legiſlator, carried to a greater height, and rendered ſtill more and more injurious to the human character. If it is not this, why then it turns man to graſs, and ſends him again to the woods, a wild ſavage and naked barbarian.

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